

Fair Political Practices Commission
MEMORANDUM

To: Chairman Johnson, Commissioners Hodson, Huguenin, Leidigh and Remy

From: Lawrence T. Woodlock, Senior Commission Counsel
Scott Hallabrin, General Counsel

Subject: Prenotice Discussion of Amendments to Regulations 18361 and 18361.7

Date: March 26, 2007

Proposed Commission Action: Approve for consideration of adoption in June new Regulation 18361 and amendment of Regulation 18361.7.

Reason for Proposal: Current regulations require the Executive Director to, among other things, conduct probable cause conferences, make probable cause findings, issue Accusations after finding probable cause, and issue subpoenas. The regulations prohibit the Executive Director from delegating these and other enforcement-related duties to anyone other than the General Counsel, except that he or she may delegate the authority to issue subpoenas to the General Counsel or the Chief of Enforcement. Anticipating that he might receive information on enforcement matters outside of the adjudicatory process, and recognizing that the General Counsel must be available to provide impartial advice to the Commission on enforcement matters, the Executive Director believes it is important to eliminate any doubt about the fundamental fairness and impartiality afforded to respondents in enforcement actions. This proposal gives the Executive Director the flexibility to delegate these enforcement-related duties to persons other than the General Counsel, when delegation of this authority will advance the agency's commitment to unbiased administrative decisionmaking.

Summary of Proposed Amendments: Regulations 18361.1 through 18361.8 set forth the Commission's procedures in administrative enforcement proceedings and the Executive Director's duties in this process. Regulation 18361.7 prohibits the Executive Director from delegating his or her duties under Regulations 18361.1 through 18361.8 to anyone other than the General Counsel (Regulation 18361.7(b)), and permits the Executive Director to delegate the authority to issue subpoenas to the General Counsel or the Chief of Enforcement (Regulation 18361.7(a).)

This proposal recasts and reorganizes these provisions to allow the Executive Director to continue to delegate these matters to the General Counsel, and also expands this discretion to permit the Executive Director to delegate, in writing, his or her duties in these enforcement proceedings to a member of the Commission staff or to an administrative law judge.

Recommendation: Approve for consideration of adoption in June new Regulation 18361

and amendment of Regulation 18361.7.